



DECK THE HALLS



Jeffrey Benson, Artistic Director

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2024

7:30 PM

First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto

peninsulacantare.org

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Welcome to Peninsula Cantare's annual Deck the Halls Concert! On behalf of the entire board, I am thrilled to have you join us for this special celebration of music and community. As we gather to enjoy the beauty and joy that music brings, we are reminded of the power it has to unite and uplift us, especially during the holiday season. Your presence here today makes a difference and helps us continue to bring the gift of choral music to our Peninsula community.

Thank you for sharing in this wonderful tradition with us. We hope that tonight's performance fills your heart with the warmth and spirit of the season.

Enjoy the concert and happy holidays!

With gratitude,



Chair, Board of Directors

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAESTRO

Thank you for joining us tonight! We are excited to share a diverse program of holiday favorites alongside several new choral works. I promise you're in for a treat from the moment the lights turn off, our candles are lit, and the opening trumpet solo begins for *Personent Hodie*.

Peninsula Cantare has continued to grow in both number and artistry. You will see several singers standing in front of you tonight who have sung with the choir for over 35 years. And singing alongside them are 10 choral artists who are performing with Peninsula Cantare for the very first time! Plus, we're joined by an amazing brass octet, percussion, and the fabulous organist Matthew Burt.

I truly adore all of the music we're performing tonight, but one of my favorites is *A Babe is Born*, by twentieth century Welsh composer William Mathias. Although he's a lesser known composer here in the US, I find his music encourages singers and audiences alike to perk up because of his creative harmonies and interesting rhythmic language. And I absolutely love the *Gloria* by John Rutter. The work premiered exactly 50 years ago this month, so we're thrilled to perform it for you tonight while celebrating its birthday!

Enjoy the holidays, be kind to yourself, and thank you for all of your support!



Artistic Director

PROGRAM

arr. LARA HOGGARD

Personent Hodie

JEFFERY AMES

Gloria Fanfare 🌸

REENA ESMAIL

The Unexpected Early Hour
from *A Winter Breviary*

GUSTAV HOLST

In the Bleak Midwinter

arr. Abbie Betinis

Finn G & Truesten Tautolo, soloists

arr. DAVID GARCÍA SALDAÑA
Puerto Rican Villancico

A la media noche

AUDIENCE SING ALONG

🌟 **Angels We Have Heard on High** 🌟

WILLIAM MATHIAS

A Babe is Born

Matthew Burt, organ

arr. WILLIAM SCHNEIDER
Traditional French Carol

Ding Dong Merrily on High (world premiere)

arr. Iris Levine
Hebrew Folk Song

Hiney Mah Tov

PAUL BASLER

Gloria from *Missa Kenya*

Jeremy Ryan, soloist

AUDIENCE SING ALONG

🌟 **Deck the Halls** 🌟

SILVESTRI & BALLARD
arr. Mark Hayes

Believe from *The Polar Express*

JOHN RUTTER

Gloria

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Andante
- III. Vivace e ritmico

*Amy Spencer, Amy Nasci, Simone Horne,
solo trio*

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? (Refrain)

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (Refrain)

See him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid
While our hearts in love we raise. (Refrain)

DECK THE HALLS

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fa la la la la la la la!
'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Don we now our gay apparel,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Troll the ancient Yuletide carol,
Fa la la la la la la la!

Fast away the old year passes,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Sing we joyous all together!
Fa la la la la la la la!
Heedless of the wind and weather,
Fa la la la la la la la!



TRANSLATIONS

Personent Hodie

*Personent hodie, voces puerulae,
laudantes iucunde
qui nobis est natus, summo Deo datus,
et de virgineo ventre procreatus.*

*In mundo nascitur,
pannis involvitur
praesepe ponitur
stabulo brutorum,
rector supernorum.
Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.*

*Magi tres venerunt,
munera offerunt,
parvulum inquirunt,
stellulam sequendo,
ipsum adorando,
Aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.*

*Omnes clericuli, pariter pueri,
cantent ut angeli: advenisti mundo,
laudes tibi fundo.
Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Let resound today, the voices of children,
joyfully praising Him,
who is born to us, given by God,
and conceived of the virgin's womb.

He was born into the world,
wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and laid in a manger,
in a stable for animals,
the master of the heavens.
The prince of Hell has lost his spoils.

Three Magi came,
they were bearing gifts,
and sought the little one,
following a star,
to worship him,
and offer him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Let all priests, just like the children,
sing like angels: "You have come to the
world, I pour out praises to you.
Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"

The Unexpected Early Hour

Praise be! praise be!
The dim, the dun, the dark withdraws
Our recluse morning's found.
The river's alive, the clearing provides
Lie down, night sky, lie down.

I feel the cold wind leaving, gone,
I feel the frost's relief.
My tracks in the snow can still be
erased, In us, the sun believes.

Winter is, Winter ends,
So the true bird calls.
The rocks cry out, my bones cry out,
All the trees applaud.
Ev'ry hard thing lauds.

Lie down, night sky, lie down.
I know the seeding season comes,
I know the ground will spring.
My fate is not night
I don't need to try
Behold! The dawn, within.

Horizon lights across my thoughts,
Horizon lines redraw.
Inside of my throat a rise of the gold
Inside my chest I thaw.

Winter is, Winter ends,
Nothing stays the same.
The moon strikes high,
The sun strikes high and
Now I hear your name:
Earth's Untired Change.

Praise be! praise be!
The unexpected early hour
grows the good light long.
Our darkness ends,
O mercy sun,
Trust can warm us all.
Begin again, again, again,
O may our day begin!

Poem by Rebecca Gayle Howard



TRANSLATIONS

A la media noche

*A la media noche al rigor del hielo
Nace Jesucristo, redentor del Cielo.
A la media noche el gallo cantaba
Y en su voz decía ya Cristo ha nacido.*

*At midnight, in the icy night,
Jesus Christ is born, redeemer of Heaven.
At midnight the rooster crowed,
And in his voice he said, "Christ is born."*

*Entre pajas nace del cielo el gran Rey
A su lado tiene la mula y el buey.
El buey como humilde las pajas le
hechaba.
La maldita mula la descubijaba.*

*In straw, the great King is born from heaven.
At his side he has the mule and the ox.
The humble ox ate the
straw bed.
The naughty mule uncovered him.*

*Su madre le mira sin poderle dar
Ni techo ni cuna donde reponar.
Tiernecito Niño mi Jesús, mi Dios
Eres suave y dulce, eres todo amor.*

*His mother looks at him without being able
to give him either roof or cradle for rest.
Tender Child, my Jesus, my God,
You are soft and sweet, you are all love.*

Hiney mah tov

*Hineh mah tov uma na'im
Shevet achim gam yachad.*

*How good and pleasant it is
For brothers & sisters to sit together.*

Gloria in excelsis Deo

*Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus bonæ
voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te,
gratias agimus tibi propter magnam
gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex cælestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.*

*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace and good will to all
people.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks
for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God almighty Father.*

*Dómine Fili Unigenite, Jesu Christe,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis;
qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.*

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus Altissimus,
Jesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spiritu:
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

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Organ

Matthew Burt

ARTISTIC STAFF



Jeffrey Benson

Jeffrey Benson is Artistic Director of Peninsula Cantare and Director of Choral Activities at San José State University. The *Washington Post* hails his choirs for singing “with an exquisite blend, subtlety of phrasing, confident musicianship and fully supported tonal.”

Dr. Benson made his international conducting debut with the Irish Chamber Orchestra and the SJSU Choraliers in Limerick, Ireland in 2016, and he made his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in 2015 with the SJSU Choirs and the New York Festival Orchestra. He has served as cover conductor for the Grammy award-winning Washington Chorus, where he helped to prepare the ensemble for Maestros Leonard Slatkin and Marvin Hamlisch.

In 2025, Benson will return to Carnegie Hall to conduct Elaine Hagenberg’s *Illuminare* with orchestra and chorus, and he will conduct Craig Hella Johnson’s *Considering Matthew Shepard* at Washington National Cathedral with Berkshire Choral International. Recently Dr. Benson’s choirs have been invited to perform with the Rolling Stones, Josh Groban, Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, the Los Angeles Festival Orchestra and the Skywalker Orchestra.

Dr. Benson is a published composer and arranger, and is the editor of the Jeffrey Benson Choral Series with Gentry Publications. His compositions are published with Colla Voce Music and Santa Barbara Music Publishing, under the Charlene Archibeque Choral Series.



Emily Hsu

Emily Hsu began her piano and musical training at the age of three. By age ten, she had won several prestigious accolades as a soloist. After moving from Taiwan to the Bay Area in 1996, she studied with renowned pianist Rebecca-Sen Chan. In addition to having an extensive and accomplished solo career, Emily is a collaborative musician by nature. She has arranged numerous choral works for the Tzu Chi Foundation and Bo-Ai Chorus, she has performed with the Cambrian Symphony under the direction of Maestro Scott Krijnen, and she’s worked with distinguished music educator Jim Yowell for over a decade.

Since 2016, Emily has performed with the California Choral Directors Association Central and Coastal Honor Choirs, as well as with the ACDA All-State Honor Choirs. She has collaborated alongside Dr. Judy Bowers (2016), Dr. Jessica Nápoles (2017), Dr. Jeffrey Benson (2017), Dr. Anthony Trecek-King (2021), and Lori Marie Rios (2023).

ARTISTIC STAFF

(Emily Hsu)

Emily currently resides in Los Gatos with her husband and daughter, and she works closely with Dr. Corie Brown at San José State University and Dr. Jeffrey Benson with both SJSU and Peninsula Cantare.

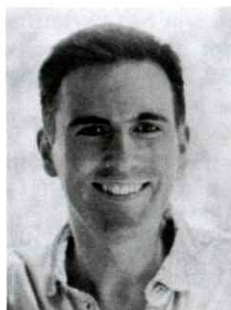


Brendan Lodge

Brendan Lodge currently serves as Operations Manager for Peninsula Cantare. In 2014, he earned his BM in Vocal Music Education at Alma College under the tutelage of Dr. Will Nichols, where he had the opportunity to conduct multiple choirs as a student director. Brendan taught middle school choir for four years in Michigan and California before earning his MM in Choral Conducting at San José State University in May 2023.

An avid musical theatre fan, Brendan has worked as a music/pit director for multiple productions, and enjoys performing when he can. Brendan also works as an arranger and frequently arranges music for his own choirs to sing. The Alma College Choirs have repeatedly commissioned his arrangements, and he had the privilege of conducting his own works for the 2014 and 2017 Alma College Homecoming Concerts. In 2017 and 2019, his arrangements were featured at the Michigan Music Conference's Choral Hour. At SJSU, Brendan worked as an instructor in Music Appreciation, Music Fundamentals, and Ear Training, with all of the SJSU choral ensembles in various administrative and artistic capacities, and served as the director of SJSU's Vocal Jazz Ensemble. Brendan now works as the choir teacher at Livermore High School in Livermore, CA. He currently resides in San José with his fiancé, Tyler, and their two Boston Terriers, Jan and Bob.

GUEST ARTIST



Matthew Burt

Matthew Burt has worked as an organist and choral conductor for over twenty years, and is currently the Music Director at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto.

Born and raised in England, he holds master's degrees from Oxford, Harvard, and Boston Universities, and has studied the organ with Nancy Granert and James David Christie, among others.

He was also the coordinator of the 2024 national convention of the American Guild of Organists, held in the Bay Area this past summer.

SAVE THE DATES



SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025
7:30 PM
First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto
peninsulacantare.org

**IN TIME OF
WAR & PEACE**

**PENINSULA
CANTARE**
Jeffrey Berenson, Artistic Director



SATURDAY, MAY 17, 2025
7:30 PM
First Congregational Church, Palo Alto
peninsulacantare.org

**A
STAR IS
BORN**

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CANTARE**
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